DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 192 372 CS 205 895

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TITLE Specifications for 1-6 Writing Skills Assessment Part II: Spelling. Technical Note.
INSTITUTION Southwest Regional Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, Los Alamitos, Calif.
REPORT NO SWRL-TN-2-80/15
PUB DATE 15 Aug 80
NOTE 97p.: For related documents see CS 205 894-898 and CS 205 900.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; Evaluation Criteria; Minimum Competencies; Minimum Competency Testing; *Skill Analysis; *Spelling; *Student Educational Objectives; *Test Construction; Test Items; *Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

This paper specifies the assessment of those spelling skills that are needed for effective writing by students in grades one through six. An introductory section provides background materials, including explanations of how the skill specifications were selected and how they are presented in this report. In the sections that follow the introduction, spelling skills are discussed, a table listing the spelling skills is presented, and the specifications are described for each skill. Each skill is described in detail, followed by the presentation of sample assessment items and descriptions of how these items are constructed. (Four related documents provide assessment specifications for other writing skills, including mechanics, language, general discourse, and specific discourse products.) (RL)

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DATE: August 15, 1980

NO: TN 2-80/15

# SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1-6 WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT PART II: SPELLING

Ann Humes, Bruce Cronnell, Joseph Lawlor, Larry Gentry, Caroline Fieker

ABSTRACT

This paper specifies the assessment of those spelling skills that are needed for effective writing. (Other writing skills are specified for assessment in separate documents: Mechanics, Language, General Discourse, and Discourse Products.) Each skill is described in detail; then sample assessment items are presented, followed by descriptions of how these items are constructed.

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SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1-6 WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT
PART II: SPELLING

Ann Humes, Bruce Cronnell, Joseph Lawlor, Larry Gentry, Caroline Fleker

A Language Skills Framework was provided for a project that had as its purpose the task of indicating language competencies in the English classroom, grades 1-6. These competencies are the criteria on which appropriate assessments can be based. One of the components of the framework is writing.

This paper describes the Spelling skills of the framework, as well as the appropriate assessments for the skills. In the first section of this paper, the writing skills specifications are generally described as background. Then the specifications for the Spelling skills are presented.

## BACKGROUND

To determine the essential writing skills, the literature was searched to identify skills that are proposed as significant by language arts authorities and by state and local competency lists. Data on the instruction in students' language arts textbooks were also analyzed for skills. A comprehensive list of skills was thus compiled and then revised to retain those skills most important for success in current school instructional programs. Thus these skills reflect writing instruction as it is, not necessarily as it should be.

Grade levels were then specified for these skills according to the level of textbook presentation, and the skills were categorized by content into a framework of writing skills. For a detailed discussion of these procedures, see Humes (1979).



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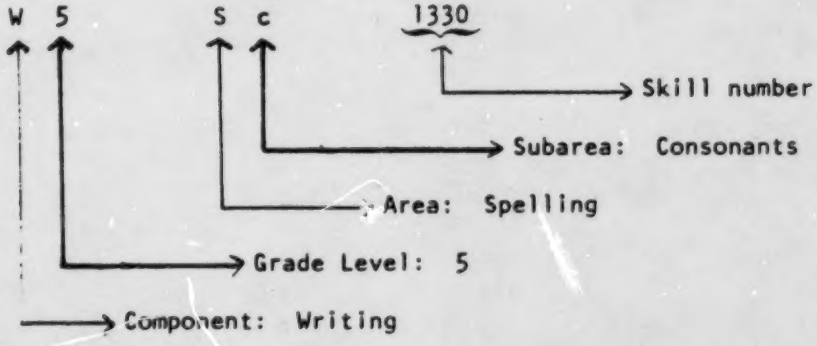
After the skills were categorized, specifications for their assessment were developed. These detailed skills specifications provide suggested information to enable others to identify each skill or to develop appropriate assessment items. The skill specifications are primarily based on analyses of several textbook series currently used in elementary schools. This approach ensures a correspondence between assessment and instruction.

Skill specifications consist of a Code Number, a Skill Statement, a Skill Description, and an Assessment description that includes both Sample Items and an Item Description.

Code Numbers

The coding system was devised to allow rapid identification of each skill. The following example illustrates the system of individual skill numbers:




As is evident from the example above, the first symbol in a code is the letter "W," which indicates the component--Writing. The next symbol, a number, indicates the grade level. Following the grade level are letters indicating the area (capital letters) and subarea (lower-case letters) of the skill. The specific skill is indicated by a four-digit code,

hierarchically divided. The left digit defines a skill. This digit may be followed by three zeros or may contain digits describing the subordinate nature of the skill (e.g., skill 1300 is a subskill of skill 1000, and skill 1330 is subsumed under skill 1300).

In addition to the Spelling covered by Part II, skills in other areas, which are sometimes referenced in Part II, are coded as follows:

Part I: Mechanics--coded M

Part III: Language--coded L

Part IV: General Discourse--coded GD

Part V: Discourse Products--coded DP

Skill Statements and Skill Descriptions

Each Skill Statement briefly specifies the coded skill, and the Skill Description notes factors involved in the use of each skill, including other inherent skills and prerequisite knowledge. Insofar as possible, the Skill Descriptions are written in non-technical language so that they may be understood by the general reader; however, some basic technical terminology is used to ensure accuracy in the descriptions.

Assessment Descriptions

The Assessment descriptions include Sample Items and Item Descriptions. For most skills, there are three or more sample items. These items reflect the actual requirements of each skill. Furthermore, the items are those most appropriate for the skill to be assessed. Constructed-response items are freqeuently included since they are often the most appropriate means of assessing writing proficiency. Where appropriate, selected-response items are delineated. In some cases, these items are either

more appropriate than or as appropriate as constructed-response items; in such cases, only the former are included.

Although selected-response items are easier to score than constructed-response items, they are frequently more exacting to prepare and may even be more difficult for students because of the amount of reading they entail. However, in some cases there is no way to lower the reading requirement and still assess the skill.

Special care is needed in the construction of distractor choices for selected-response items. Those used in the sample items and described in the Item Descriptions are carefully designed and written so that they can also be used for the diagnostic purposes discussed in the Item Descriptions. For additional information on writing appropriate assessment items and distractors, see Humes (forthcoming).

The distractor choices are also appropriate for the grade level of the skill being assessed. In the sample items, the correct choice is generally listed first for purposes of explication; however, in an actual assessment instrument, the answer choices would be randomly ordered.

Items should assess ability fairly; they should not trick students. Correspondingly, specific directions are painstakingly written for the items so that students can understand precisely what they are to do. Furthermore, examiners are expected to provide necessary assistance during administration of the items so that students' understanding of a task is increased; however, examiners must also avoid giving clues to the answers. Another caution pertains to the items themselves: Most of the items (but not the item types) have never been used with students; therefore, they should be piloted at the specified grade levels.

A description of the item type accompanies each set of sample items. The Item Description details the exact procedures for completing each item, constructing additional similar items, and creating appropriate distractors. The description also notes any other important considerations relevant to assessing the skill with the sample-item format.

The vocabulary used in the sample items (including directions) is that documented for the Harris and Jacobson (1972) core vocabulary for reading from the preprimer level through grade 5. Since technical terms are generally not included in readers but are often needed for item directions, words are also used from the Harris and Jacobson content list for English (p. 106) and from the student terms in Cronnell (1979). In addition, since Harris and Jacobson eliminated proper nouns, a list of names was compiled, based on occurrence in at least two out of four commonly used elementary school reading programs. When other proper nouns are required for specific skills, those used are ones considered most familiar to students.

Harris and Jacobson (1972) commonly strip words of various suffixes; therefore, unlisted forms of words are used according to the following grade-level schedule:

Grade 1: -s

Grade 2: -es, -ed, -ing (preferrably without spelling changes until grade 3); compounds of listed words

Grade 3: -er, -est, -ly, -y

Grade 4: contractions, possessives

Grade 5: un-

All of the previously mentioned word lists indicate the grade level at which the words can be read by most students. The words used in the sample items appear at earlier grade levels; e.g., grade 4 items are written in words appearing on the list no later than grade 3. This criterion helps ensure that reading ability does not interfere with writing performance.

Sometimes it is necessary--especially in directions--to use words not available at the grade level of the skill. Such words are identified in the assessment descriptions and should be read to the students. The limited vocabulary available for grade 1 precludes writing directions that use only words acceptable for that grade level; thus examiners should read all the directions to students in that grade level, (Reading directions for students may also be appropriate for Grade 2.)

The sample items avoid language (connotative or denotative) and stereotypes that may offend individuals or groups. In particular, special attention is given to avoiding sexism, racism, ageism, and other negative images such as violence and excessively aggressive behavior.

In the section that follows, Spelling skills are discussed, a table listing the Spelling skills is presented, and the specifications are described for each skill.

SPELLING SKILLS

The Spelling category includes the various skills needed to produce correctly spelled words. The ability to spell correctly permits students to use a greater variety of words in their writing and thus to produce compositions that are more likely to be judged as effectively written. For precise diagnosis and assessment, the skills focus on the spellings for specific sounds, although it is understood that good spelling requires the production of whole words in connected discourse.

The skills in this area may overlap with what can be called "word-building" or even "vocabulary" skills; this is especially the case with affix skills. However, since all the skills result in correctly spelled words and are most precisely tested by formats for spelling assessment, their categorization in this skill area is appropriate as well as convenient.

The following are the subareas of spelling:

Consonants. The consonant-spelling skills are included here. They are critical to the correct representation of words.

Vowels. This subarea is comprised of the skills for spelling vowels. English vowels are complex and difficult. However, the skills for spelling them are essential to the correct representation of words.

Affixes. This subarea includes the spelling of both suffixes and prefixes. Correctly spelled affixes permit the generation of new words. The inflectional suffixes (i.e., -s, -es, -ed, -ing, -er, -est) are essential in any

written product. Other suffixes (derivational suffixes) are also important for the generation of words that can enhance writing. In addition, several prefixes are commonly taught and used in writing.

Suffixation Processes. The skills for adding suffixes to words are included in this area. When suffixes are added to many words, spelling changes are required; e.g., consonant doubling, e-dropping. Learning to implement these changes is difficult but important.

Miscellaneous. The skills for spelling irregular words, compounds, and homophones (e.g., week-weak) are combined in this subarea. (Spelling skills that involve capitalization or punctuation--e.g., proper nouns, contractions--are covered under Mechanics.)

The table that precedes the specifications lists all the skills included in this skill category.

For assessment purposes, the constructed-response task described in the skill specifications is preferred because it most closely parallels self-generated spelling. However, since constructed-response assessment is not always practical, selected-response formats are provided.

The stimulus for assessment items is usually either a picture or a sentence. When pictures are used, they should be unambiguously recognizable. The pictured word must be in the students' oral recognition vocabulary, but need not be in their reading vocabulary. In fact, when it is not in their reading vocabulary, the pictured word is a better test

of spelling--not reading--ability. If possible, the examiner should not pronounce the picture names for the students. This constraint allows students to generate answers on the basis of their own pronunciations.

When a sentence stimulus is used, it allows greater latitude in the selection of words containing the desired spelling. The primary disadvantage of the sentence format is that it requires the student to perform a reading task in order to determine the proper spelling.

| SPELLING (S) | Grade level for assessment | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Consonants (c) | | | | | | |
| 1000 . Spells consonant sounds: | | | | | | |
| 1100 Initial: | | | | | | |
| 1110 /b/-b, /d/-d, /f/-f, /g/-g, /h/-h, /j/-j, /k/-k, /k/-c, /l/-l, /m/-m, /n/-n, /p/-p, /r/-r, /s/-s, /t/-t, /v/-v, /w/-w, /y/-y, /z/-z. | ■ | | | | | |
| 1120 /f/-ph, /j/-g, /kw/-qu, /n/-kn, /r/-wr, /s/-c. | | | | | ■ | |
| 1200 medial: doubled consonants between vowels. | | | | ■ | | |
| 1300 final: | | | | | | |
| 1310 /b/-b, /d/-d, /g/-g, /m/-m, /n/-n, /p/-p, /t/-t. | ■ | | | | | |
| 1320 /ks/-x, /f/-ff, /k/-ck, /l/-ll, /s/-ss. | | ■ | | | | |
| 1330 /f/-ph, /j/-ge, /j/-dge, /m/-mb, /s/-ce. | | | | | ■ | |
| 2000 Spells consonant clusters: | | | | | | |
| 2100 initial: bl, br, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gl, gr, pl, pr sc, sk, sm, sn, sp, st, sw tr, tw. | | ■ | | | | |
| 2200 final: ct, ft, ld, lk, lp lt, mp, nd, nt, sk, st. | | ■ | | | | |
| 3000 Spells consonant digraphs: /ch/-ch, /ng/-ng, /sh/-sh, /th/, /th/-th, /hw/-wh. | | ■ | | | | |

| SPELLING (continued) | Grade level for assessment | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Vowels (v) | | | | | | |
| 1000 . Spells one-letter vowels: | | | | | | |
| 1100 /a/-a, /e/-e, /i/-i, /ŏ/-o. /u/-u. | ■ | | | | | |
| 1200 /ē/-e, /ī/-y. | | ■ | | | | |
| 1300 /ŏ/-a, /ô/-o, /ů/-u. /ō/-o. | | | | ■ | | |
| 1400 /u/-o, /ī/-i. | | | | | ■ | |
| 2000 Spells vowel digraphs: | | | | | | |
| 2100 /ā/-ai, /ā/-ay, /ē/-ea, /ē/-ee, /ō/-oa, /ō/-ow, /ū/-oo, /ů/-oo. | | ■ | | | | |
| 2200 /ī/-ie, /ī/-igh, /ū/-ue, /ū/, /yū/-ew, /oi/-oi, /oi/-oy, /ou/-ou, /ou/-ow. | | | | ■ | | |
| 2300 /e/-ea, /ô/-au, /ô/-augh, /ô/-aw, /ô/-ough, /u/-ou. | | | | | ■ | |
| 3000 Spells vowel-consonant-e pattern: | | | | | | |
| 3100 /ā/-a...e, /ī/-i...e, /ō/-o...e. | | ■ | | | | |
| 3200 /ē/-e...e, /u/-o...e, /ū/, /yū/-u...e. | | | | | | ■ |
| 4000 Spells vowel-r pattern: | | | | | | |
| 4100 /är/-ar, /ôr/-or. | | | ■ | | | |
| 4200 /er/-are, /er/-air, /er/-ear, /ėr/-er, /ėr/-ir, /ėr/-or, /ėr/-ur, /ir/-ear, /ôr/-ore. | | | | ■ | | |
| 5000 Spells the schwa sound (/ə/). | | | | | | ■ |

| SPELLING (continued) | Grade level for assessment | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6000 Spells endings with schwa: /ər/ endings: ar, er, or; /əl/ endings: al, el, le. | | | | | | |
| **Affixes (a)** | | | | | | |
| 1000 Spells plurals by adding -s or -es | | | | | | |
| 2000 Spells verb forms by adding -s, -es, -ed, -ing: one-syllable verbs requiring no changes. | | | | | | |
| 3000 Spells new words by adding suffixes: | | | | | | |
| 3100 -ly, -er, -est. | | | | | | |
| 3200 -age, -al, -ance, -ar, -ful -ion, -less, -ment, -ness, -or, -y. | | | | | | |
| 4000 Spells new words by adding prefixes: a-, dis-, ex-, re-, un-. | | | | | | |
| **Suffixation Processes (sp)** | | | | | | |
| 1000 Spells plurals by changing f or fe to v and adding -es. | | | | | | |
| 2000 Spells new words by changing y to i when adding certain suffixes. | | | | | | |
| 3000 Spells new words by dropping final e when adding certain suffixes. | | | | | | |
| 4000 Spells new words by doubling the final consonant when adding certain suffixes. | | | | | | |
| 5000 Spells new words by changing the spelling of the root word when adding certain suffixes: be to pt, d(e) to s, t to ss, er to r, y to ic. | | | | | | |

| SPELLING (continued) | Grade level for assessment | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Miscellaneous (m) | | | | | | |
| 1000 . Spells irregular words | | | | ■ | | |
| 2000 Spells compound words. | | | | ■ | | |
| 3000 Spells homophones.* | | | | ■ | | ■ |

*Appropriate grade-level content is included in the skill specifications.

Skill: WI Sc 1110

Skill Statement

Spells initial consonant sounds: /b/-b, /d/-d, /f/-f, /g/-g, /h/-h, /j/-j, /k/-k, /k/-c, /l/-l, /m/-m, /n/-n, /p/-p, /r/-r, /s/-s, /t/-t, /v/-v, /w/-w, /y/-y, /z/-z.

Skill Description

The student hears the initial consonant sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letter. In the case of the /k/-k or c spelling, the student also applies the rule that discriminates between the spellings; i.e., /k/ is spelled with k before e, i, and y, but with c before a, o, and u.

The consonant sounds for this skill are spelled with single letters.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter that finishes the word.

1. [picture: gate]

   ___ate

2. [picture: cat]

   ___at

3. [picture: dog]

   ___og

Directions: Which letter finishes the word?

4. [picture: gate]

   ___ate

   A. g
   B. j
   C. k

WI Sc 1110 (continued)

5. [picture: cat]

___at

A. c
B. k
C. g

6. [picture: dog]

___og

A. d
B. b
C. t

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: name, picture, write, letter, finishes, and which.

Item Description

The primary stimulus for this item is a picture. The picture is presented along with the printed word, which has a blank where the assessed spelling belongs. A picture with an initial consonant cluster should not be used to elicit a single consonant spelling; e.g., a picture of a swing should not be used as a stimulus for the spelling of /s/.

For the constructed-response task (items 1-3), the student fills in the blank with the correct spelling.

For the selected-response task (items 4-6), the student selects the correct spelling from the answer choices. The number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three. Furthermore, including a larger number of choices may be difficult or impossible because the spelling does not have a sufficient number of appropriate distractors.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. The distractors reflect common spelling errors; they generally derive from sound or spelling confusions.

b - d, m, p, v
d - b, n, t
f - v, p
g - j, k/c, d
h - n, p, k
j - g, ch, d
k - c, g, ck, t
l - r, w, t
m - b, n
n - d, m, t
p - h, b, q
r - l, w
s - c, z
t - d, n, k
v - f, b
w - r, l
y - v, l
z - s, x

Skill: W5 Sc 1120

Skill Statement

Spells initial consonant sounds: /f/-ph, /j/-g, /kw/-qu, /n/-kn, /r/-wr, /s/-c.

Skill Description

The student hears the initial consonant sound in a word and generates the corresponding letters. The student also applies the following rules: /j/ may be spelled with g and /s/ spelled with c before e, i, and y, but not before a, o, and u; the /kw/ cluster is always spelled qu.

No spelling rules govern the use of the two-letter consonants ph, kn, or wr. The student must either memorize their use in certain words or rely on a dictionary for assistance.

The ability to generate the more common spellings for these sounds is assessed at a lower level (Skill W1 Sc 1110) and is a prerequisite to this skill.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Did you hear the ___one ring?
2. I found the answer to your ___estion.
3. There are one hundred years in a ___entury.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. Did you hear the ___one ring?

   A. ph
   B. f
   C. p
   D. pf

5. I found the answer to your ___estion.

   A. qu
   B. kw
   C. qw
   D. ku

6. There are one hundred years in a ___entury.

A. c
B. s
C. sc
D. cs

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letter(s). Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

Distractors for selected-response items should include the consonant (or consonants) that commonly represents the sound (all B's). Selection of this answer would indicate that the student is familiar with the general sound-symbol rule for that sound, but not the exceptions requiring the target spelling. Distractors C and D represent graphic confusions (letter omissions, additions, reversals) and/or sound confusions.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

ph - f, p, pf
g - j, ch, sh
qu - kw, qw, ku, q
kn - n, nk, k
wr - r, rw, w
c - s, sc, cs

Skill: W4 Sc 1200

Skill Statement

Spells medial consonant sounds: doubled consonants between vowels.

Skill Description

The student hears the consonant sound in the middle of a two-syllable word and is able to generate the corresponding doubled consonant by applying the rule that a consonant is doubled when it follows a short vowel and precedes a vowel or the ending le; e.g., dinner, apple.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: rabbit]

   ra__it

2. [picture: ladder]

   la__er

3. [picture: hammer]

   ha__er

4. [picture: turtle]

   tur__le

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

5. [picture: rabbit]

   ra___it

   A. bb
   B. b
   C. dd
   D. pp

W4 Sc 1200 (continued)

6. [picture: ladder]

la__er

A. dd
B. d
C. bb
D. tt

7. [picture: hammer]

ha__er

A. mm
B. m
C. nn
D. bb

8. [picture: turtle]

tur___le

A. t
B. tt
C. rt
D. dd

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

9. Climb up the la__er to the top of the house.

10. Do you drink milk or co__ee?

11. We ate fish for di__er.

12. We saw a ti__er at the zoo.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

13. Climb up the la__er to the top of the house.

A. dd
B. d
C. bb
D. tt

14. Do you drink milk or co__ee?

A. ff
B. f
C. tt
D. pp

W4 Sc 1200 (continued)

15. We ate fish for di__er.

A. nn
B. n
C. hh
D. mm

16. We saw a ti__er at the zoo.

A. g
B. gg
C. qq
D. kk

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-8) or a simple sentence (items 9-16). Items 1-4 and 9-12 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letter(s). Items 5-8 and 13-16 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

Words used to elicit spellings (except non-exemplar items; i.e., items 4, 8, 12, 16) should contain two-syllables and must reflect the (C) VCCV(C) or (C)VCCle spelling pattern. The medial consonants must be identical. Non-exemplars should be employed to prevent students from mechanically following the doubled-consonant pattern for all items on the assessment. Non-exemplars may follow the (C)VCV(C) spelling pattern (e.g., tiger) where the first vowel is a long vowel or, if the medial consonants are not identical, the (C)VCCV(C) spelling pattern (e.g., lumber).

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), the correct consonant in its singular form (all choice B's). Students who select B may be aware of the correct sound-symbol relationship, but they do not know how to apply the doubling rule. Answer C is a letter confusion or reversal showing a problem of visual perception or letter knowledge. Answer D is a phonemic confusion revealing a need for remediation in auditory disrimination.

Skill: WI Sc 1310

Skill Statement

Spells final consonant sounds: /b/-b, /d/-d, /g/-g, /m/-m, /n/-n, /p/-p, /t/-t.

Skill Description

The student hears the final consonant sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letter.

The consonant sounds for this skill are spelled with single letters.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter that finishes the word.

1. [picture: top]

   to___

2. [picture: hat]

   ha___

3. [picture: bug]

   bu___

Directions: Which letter finishes the word?

4. [picture: top]

   to___

   A. p
   B. b
   C. d

5. [picture: hat]

   ha___

   A. t
   B. d
   C. p

WI Sc 1310 (continued)

6. [picture: bug]

bu___

A. g
B. b
C. j

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: name, picture, write, letter, finishes, and which.

Item Description

The stimulus at this grade level is a picture. The picture is presented along with the printed word, which has a blank where the assessed spelling belongs. A picture with a final consonant cluster should not be used to elicit a single consonant spelling; e.g., a picture of a nest should not be used as a stimulus for the spelling of /t/.

For the constructed-response task (items 1-3), the student fills in the blank with the correct spelling. For the selected-response task (items 4-6), the student selects the correct spelling from the answer choices. The number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. The distractors reflect common spelling errors; they generally derive from sound or spelling confusions.

b - d, g, p
d - b, g, t
g - b, d, j, k/c, t
m - n, b, p
n - m, d, t
p - b, d, k, q, t
t - d, k, p

Skill: W2 Sc 1320

Skill Statement

Spells final consonant sounds: /ks/-x, /f/-ff, /k/-ck, /l/-ll, /s/-ss.

Skill Description

The student hears the final consonant sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letter(s). The student also applies the following specific rules: /ks/ is spelled x at the end of a root word; /k/, /f/, /l/, and /s/ are spelled ck, ff, ll, and ss at the ends of words after short vowels.

The ability to generate a single letter for a final consonant sound is assessed at an earlier level (Skill W1 Sc 1310) and is a prerequisite to this skill.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: box]

   bo___

2. [picture: clock]

   clo___

3. [picture: glass]

   gla___

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. [picture: box]

   bo___

   A. x
   B. ks
   C. cks

W2 Sc 1320 (continued)

5. [picture: clock]

clo ___

A. ck
B. k
C. kc

6. [picture: glass]

gla___

A. ss
B. s
C. st

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

7. Greg has a cold, and he is very si___.

8. May I have a gla___ of water?

9. Lisa fe___ off her bike.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

10. Greg has a cold. He is very si___.

A. ck
B. k
C. kc

11. May I have a gla___ of water?

A. ss
B. s
C. st

12. Lisa fe___ off her bike.

A. ll
B. l
C. ld

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

W2 Sc 1320 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). Items 1-3 and 7-9 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three spellings.

For selected-response items, the number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's above), choices should include the most common misspelling (all choice B's) and a more distant distractor (all C's).

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. The first distractor listed is the most common misspelling. The second and following distractors represent less frequent errors.

x - ks, cks, cs, s
ff - f, ft
ck - k, kc, c
ll - l, ld
ss - s, st, z

Skill: W5 Sc 1330

Skill Statement

Spells final consonant sounds: /f/-ph, /j/-ge, /j/-dge, /m/-mb, /s/-ce.

Skill Description

The student hears the final consonant sound in a word and generates the corresponding letters. The student also applies the following specific rules: final /j/ is spelled with ge after long vowels and consonants (e.g., page, bulge), and with dge after short vowels (e.g., badge, wedge); /s/ is spelled with ce after long vowels (e.g., race), two-letter vowels (e.g., choice), and consonants (e.g., since).

Final /m/ spelled mb occurs infrequently and is not governed by rules of correspondence. Final /f/ spelled ph also occurs infrequently and cannot be predicted by its environment. In both cases, students must memorize their use in words or rely on a dictionary for assistance.

The ability to generate the more common spellings for these final consonant sounds (with the exception of /j/) is assessed at two lower levels (Skills W1 Sc 1310 and W2 Sc 1320) and is a prerequisite to this skill.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. The first pa___ of the book is missing.

2. Jean likes to cli___trees.

3. Art drank a glass of orange jui___.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. The first pa___ of the book is missing.

   A. ge
   B. dge
   C. je
   D. j

5. Jean likes to cli___ trees.

   A. mb
   B. me
   C. m
   D. b

W5 Sc 1330 (continued)

6. Art drank a glass of orange jui___.

A. ce
B. se
C. ss
D. c

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

Answer choices for selected-response items, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), should include alternate spellings for the target sound (all B's and C's) and a single letter that represents a sound or graphic confusion (all D's).

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

ph - ff, f, p
ge - dge, j, je, g
dge - ge, j, je, g
mb - m, me, mm, b
ce - se, ss, c, s

Skill: W2 Sc 2100

Skill Statement

Spells initial consonant clusters: bl, br, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gl, gr, pl, pr, sc, sk, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, tr, tw.

Skill Description

The student hears the initial consonant cluster in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letters. The student also applies the rule that /k/ is usually spelled with c when it is the initial sound in a cluster. The student understands that each sound in a cluster is spelled as it is spelled alone.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: snake]

___ake

2. [picture: clock]

___ock

3. [picture: drum]

___um

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. [picture: snake]

___ake

A. sn
B. s
C. sm

5. [picture: block]

___ock

A. bl
B. pl
C. b

W2 Sc 2100 (continued)

6. [picture: drum]

___um

A. dr
B. tr
C. d

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

7. This letter to Ann must have a ___amp.

8. What color is the cat? It is ___ack.

9. The ___ock tells us what time it is.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

10. This letter to Ann must have a ___amp.

A. st
B. ts
C. s

11. What color is the cat? It is ___ack.

A. bl
B. dl
C. pl

12. The baby can play with this ___ock.

A. bl
B. pl
C. b

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). Items 1-3 and 7-9 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three spellings.

When selected-response items are used, the number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three. In addition to the correct spelling (all choices A's above), choices should include the most common misspellings (all B's and C's).

W2 Sc 2100 (continued)

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. The distractors represent common spelling errors due to phonemic confusions, letter omissions, or letter reversals.

| | |
|---|---|
| bl - b, dl, pl | pr - p, pl |
| br - b, dr, pr | sc - c, s, sk |
| cl - c, k, kl | sk - s, sc |
| cr - c, k, kr | sm - s, sn |
| dr - br, d, tr | sn - s, sm |
| fl - f, fr | sp - s, st |
| fr - f, fl | st - s, sp, ts |
| gl - cl, g, gr | sw - s, w |
| gr - cr, g, gl | tr - t, dr, tw |
| pl - bl, p, pr | tw - t, tr |

Skill: W2 Sc 2200

Skill Statement

Spells final consonant clusters: ct, ft, ld, lk, lp, lt, mp, nd, nt, sk, st.

Skill Description

The student hears the final consonant cluster in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letters. The student also applies the specific rule that the sound /k/ is spelled with k after another consonant at the end of a word (e.g., ask, milk), but with c when it is the initial sound in a cluster with these exceptions, each sound in a cluster is spelled as it is spelled alone.

Final consonant clusters are a common source of spelling errors and are generally more difficult for students than initial clusters. The pronunciation, and consequently the spelling, of final consonant clusters is heavily influenced by pronunciation. Common confusions (in both pronunciation and spelling) include the omission of the first consonant in the clusters beginning with l and m, and the omission of the final consonant in the others.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: stamp]

   sta___

2. [picture: nest]

   ne___

3. [picture: tent]

   te___

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. [picture: stamp]

   sta___

   A. mp
   B. p
   C. mpe

W2 Sc 2200 (continued)

5. [picture: nest]

ne___

A. st
B. s
C. ss

6. [picture: tent]

te___

A. nt
B. n
C. t

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

7. Birds sleep in a ne ___.

8. Mike has a penny to spe___ at the store.

9. My birthday gi___ was a new bike.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

10. Birds sleep in a ne___.

A. st
B. ss
C. ts

11. Mike has a penny to spe___ at the store.

A. nd
B. n
C. d

12. My birthday gi___ was a new bike.

A. ft
B. f
C. ff

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabulary: write, finish.

W2 Sc 2200 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). Items 1-3 and 7-9 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three spellings.

Target words should be restricted to one-syllable words with a single vowel. Words with a silent consonant (e.g., ta<u>l</u>k, wa<u>l</u>k) must be avoided.

When the selected-response items are used, the number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

The spellings to be assessed are listed below with suggested distractors. At least one distractor should reflect the common error of dropping one of the consonants in the cluster; e.g., <u>fast</u> is often spelled <u>fas</u>.

<u>ct</u> - ck, ckt, k
<u>ft</u> - f, ff, fd, t
<u>ld</u> - l, ll, le, d, de
<u>lk</u> - ck, ke, lck
<u>lp</u> - p, llp, pe
<u>lt</u> - l, ld, ll, t
<u>mp</u> - m, p, mpe, np
<u>nd</u> - n, nde, d
<u>nt</u> - n, nd, t
<u>sk</u> - s, ss, st, k, ks
<u>st</u> - s, ss, t, ts

Skill: W2 Sc 3000

Skill Statement

Spells consonant digraphs: /ch/-ch, /ng/-ng, /sh/-sh, /th/, /th/-th, /hw/-wh.

Skill Description

The student hears the consonant sound at either the beginning or the end of a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding digraph. The student understands that each of the above sounds is spelled with a specific two-letter consonant, and that the /th/ sound, as in thin, and the /th/ sound, as in then, are both spelled with th. The student also applies the rule that /ch/ is spelled ch at the end of a word after a long-vowel sound or after another consonant. (The /ch/ sound spelled tch is not assessed at this level, although tch is the general spelling for /ch/ after a short vowel.)

The fact that a digraph consists of two letters that spell only one sound is a source of difficulty for some students. It is relatively common for students to omit one of the letters in attempting to spell a digraph. Additionally, the /hw/ sound (e.g., why, which) is not differentiated from /w/ in many dialects. Students who do not differentiate between the two sounds must memorize words with the wh spelling.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: chair]

   ___air

2. [picture: fish]

   fi___

3. [picture: thumb]

   ___umb

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. [picture: chair]

   ___air

   A. ch
   B. sh
   C. c

W2 Sc 3000 (continued)

5. [picture: fish]

   fi___

   A. sh
   B. ch
   C. ss

6. [picture: thumb]

   ___umb

   A. th
   B. t
   C. f

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish that word.

7. Please sit in the ___air.

8. Put the food on a di___.

9. May I go wi___ you?

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

10. Please sit in the ___air.

    A. ch
    B. sh
    C. c

11. Put the food on a di___.

    A. sh
    B. ch
    C. s

12. May I go wi___ you?

    A. th
    B. t
    C. f

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

W2 Sc 3000 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). Items 1-3 and 7-9 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three spellings.

The number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's above), choices should include the most common misspellings (all B's and C's).

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

The digraphs to be assessed are listed below with their common misspellings.

ch (initial) - sh, c, j, hc
ch (final) - sh, g, hc
ng (final) - g, n, gn
sh (initial) - ch, s, h, hs
sh (final) - ch, s, ss, hs
th (initial) - d, t, ht, f
th (final) - f, ff, t, ht
wh (initial) - w, hw

Skill: W1 Sv 1100

Skill Statement

Spells one-letter vowels: /a/-a, /e/-e, /i/-i, /o/-o, /u/-u.

Skill Description

The student hears the short-vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letter.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter that finishes the word.

1. [picture: bed].

   b___d

2. [picture: pig]

   p___g

3. [picture: hat]

   h___t

Directions: Which letter finishes the word?

4. [picture: bed]

   b___d

   A. e
   B. a
   C. i

5. [picture: pig]

   p___g

   A. i
   B. e
   C. a

WI Sv 1100 (continued)

6. [picture: hat]

h___t

A. a
B. e
C. o

Comment: The following words may not be in the students' reading vocabularies: name, picture, write, letter, finishes, and which.

Item Description

The stimulus is a picture presented along with the printed word. A blank is placed where the assessed spelling belongs.

Words ending in /r/ must be avoided. Particular attention should be given to the construction of items assessing /e/ and /i/. In some dialects /e/ and /i/ are not always distinguished, particularly when the vowel is followed by the nasal consonants /n/ and /m/; e.g., pen and pin are pronounced the same in some dialects.

For the constructed-response task (items 1-3), the student fills in the blank with the correct spelling.

For the selected-response task (items 4-6) the student selects the correct spelling (all choice A's in the sample items) from the answer choices. The distractors (all B's and C's) reflect those sounds that are most commonly confused with the stimulus. The number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three.

Short-vowel spellings are listed below with their best distractors. The distractors reflect common spelling errors, usually caused by sound confusions.

a - e, o, u
e - a, i
i - e, a
o - a, u
u - a, o

Skill: W2 Sv 1200

Skill Statement

Spells one-letter vowels: /ē/-e, /ī/-y.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound at the end of a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letter. The student understands that /ē/ is sometimes spelled e at the end of monosyllabic words (e.g., be, me) and that /ī/ is usually spelled y after consonant digraphs and consonant clusters (e.g., shy, sky). A similar spelling, final /ō/ spelled o, is not assessed because it appears in only three one-syllable words--go, no, and so.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Sue and I went to the zoo. W___ saw many animals.

2. I would like to fl___ in an airplane.

3. The grass was wet, but now it is dr___.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. Sue and I went to the zoo W___ saw many animals.

   A. e
   B. ee
   C. i

5. I would like to fl___ in an airplane.

   A. y
   B. i
   C. ie

6. The grass was wet, but now it is dr____.

   A. y
   B. i
   C. ie

W2 Sv 1200 (continued)

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. A picture format cannot be used in assessing this skill because a sufficient number of words with the target spellings (e.g., me, she, fly, cry, etc) cannot be unambiguously depicted. Items 1-3 are of the constructed-response type for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters.

Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three various spellings. The number of answer choices at this level should be limited to three. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's), choices should include other spellings for the same sound in other environments (all B's and C's).

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with suggested distractors.

e - ee, ea, y, i
y - i, ie, igh

Comment: While the distractors y (for e) and ie and igh (for y), are not commonly taught at this level, students may be familiar with certain words containing these spellings (e.g., baby, pie, high). Examiners should exercise care in employing these distractors.

Skill: W4 Sv 1300

Skill Statement

Spells one-letter vowels: /ô/-a, /ô/-o, /ů/-u, /o͞/-o.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding one-letter spelling. The student also applies the following rules: /ô/ is spelled with a after w or before l (e.g., wash, ball); /ô/ is spelled with o before f, g, ng, s, or th (e.g., off, log, long, lost, moth); /ů/ is often spelled u after p, b, or f (e.g., put, bush, full). The student also understands that /o͞/ spelled with o is a common spelling before consonant clusters (e.g., cold).

Although the sound /ô/ is distinct from the sound /o/ in some dialects, in other dialects, only the latter occurs. For speakers who do not differentiate between the two sounds, the o spelling for /ô/ is simply an extension of the regular o spelling for /o/.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Please w__sh your hands with hot water.

2. How much money will it c__st?

3. We had to p__sh the car to get it started.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. Please w__sh your hands with hot water.

   A. a
   B. o
   C. aw
   D. ou

5. How much money will it c__st?

   A. o
   B. a
   C. aw
   D. ou

W4 Sv 1300 (continued)

6. We had to p__sh the car to get it started.

A. u
B. o
C. oo
D. ou

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letter. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a vowel digraph is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), the single vowel that shares or closely parallels the target sound (all choice B's), and two vowel digraphs that may be confused with the target spelling (all C's and D's).

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

a - o, aw, ou
o (/ô/)-a, aw, au, ou
u - o, oo, ou
o (/ō/)-ow, oe, u, oa

Skill: W5 Sv 1400

Skill Statement

Spells one-letter vowels: /u/-o, /ī/-i.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound in a word and generates the corresponding one-letter spelling. The student understands that /u/ is often spelled with o before th, v, or n (e.g., other, oven, front), and that /ī/ is usually spelled with i before a consonant cluster (e.g., kind, child).

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. We have a fence around our fr__nt yard.

2. My br__ther and I went to the store.

3. The zoo has many w__ld animals.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. We have a fence around our fr__nt yard.

   A. o
   B. u
   C. oo
   D. ou

5. My br__ther and I went to the store.

   A. o
   B. u
   C. oo
   D. ou

6. The zoo has many w__ld animals.

   A. i
   B. y
   C. ie
   D. ei

W5 Sv 1400 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letter. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), the single vowel that shares or closely parallels the target sound (all choice B's), a vowel digraph that may be confused with the target spelling (all C's), and another vowel digraph that spells the target sound (all D's).

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

o - u, oo, ou
I - y, ie, ei, igh

Skill: W2 Sv 2100

Skill Statement

Spells vowel digraphs: /ā/-ai, /ā/-ay, /ē/-ea, /ē/-ee, /ō/-oa, /ō/-ow, /ū/-oo, /ů/-oo.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding vowel digraph. The student understands that a long-vowel sound is usually spelled with more than one letter, but since each of the above sounds may be spelled in different ways, the student must recall the proper spelling for a specific word.

With the exception of the final spellings ay and ow, the vowel digraphs to be assessed usually occur as medial vowels. The digraphs ee and /ū/-oo occur both medially and finally. The oo spelling of /ů/ usually occurs only before k and d (foot is an exception). Words containing medial vowel digraphs are frequently misspelled by application of the vowel-consonant-e spelling pattern (e.g., trane instead of train).

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: train]

   tr___

2. [picture: goat]

   g___

3. [picture: book]

   b___

Directions: Which letters finish the word?

4. [picture: train]

   tr___

   A. ain
   B. ane
   C. an

W2 Sv 2100 (continued)

5. [picture: goat]

g___

A. oat
B. ote
C. ot

6. [picture: book]

b___

A. ook
B. uk
C. ok

Directions: Write the letters that finish the word.

7. We got wet when drops of r___ began to fall.

8. Do you sl___ in a bed at night?

9. Did you read the story in the b___?

Directions: Which letters finish the word?

10. We got wet when drops of r___ began to fall.

A. ain
B. ane
C. an

11. Do you sl___ in a bed at night?

A. eep
B. eap
C. ep

12. Did you read the story in the b___?

A. ook
B. uk
C. ok

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

W2 Sv 2100 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). Items 1-3 and 7-9 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three various spellings.

Many words that are spelled with vowel digraphs are homophones (e.g., tail-tale, road-rode). Homophones are assessed elsewhere (Skill W4 Sm 3000) and should be avoided in assessing this skill. Additionally, words in which an /r/ sound follows the vowel should not be employed as target words. The /r/ sound often changes the sound of the vowel and, in some dialects, is omitted in speech. The various vowel-r patterns are also assessed elsewhere (Skills W3 Sv 4100 and W4 Sv 4200).

Target words are cued with the initial consonant or consonant cluster. By omitting the final consonant as an additional cue, examiners can employ the vowel-consonant-e spellings as distractors (e.g., trane as a distractor for train). Consequently, the ability to spell final consonants is prerequisite to the assessment of this skill.

When the picture stimulus is used, the printed word is presented with a blank where the assessed spelling belongs. When the selected-response format is used, the number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's above), choices may include vowel-consonant-e spellings for long-vowel items, other vowel digraphs, or single vowel letters.

The vowel digraphs are listed below with their suggested distractors. The three dots between some letters (e.g., a...e), indicate a missing consonant and suggest use of words following the vowel-consonant-e spelling pattern.

ai - a...e, ay, a
ay - ae, a, ai
ea - ee, e, e...e
ee - ea, e, e...e
oa - o...e, oe, ow, o
ow - oe, o, oa
oo (/u/) - u...e, ue, u
oo (/ù/) - u, o

Skill: W4 Sv 2200

Skill Statement

Spells vowel digraphs: /ī/-ie, /ī/-igh, /ū/-ue, /ū/, /yū/-ew, /oi/-oi, /oi/-oy, /ou/-ou, /ou/-ow.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding digraph. (The term "digraph" here refers to the spelling of a single sound that is represented by two or more letters.) The student also applies the following specific rules: /ī/ spelled with ie occurs finally and is found in only four words, die, lie, pie, and tie; /ī/ spelled with igh occurs finally or before t (e.g., high, night); /ū/ spelled with ue occurs finally (e.g., blue). The ew spelling represents two sounds: the vowel sound in words such as few, as well as the vowel sound in words such as chew. It occurs at the end of a word and often indicates past tense (e.g., drew, grew). The sound /oi/ is spelled with oi in the middle of a word (e.g., boil) and with oy at the end of a word (e.g., boy); /ou/ spelled with ow is used at the end of a word or before a final n (e.g., cow, town), but /ou/ is spelled with ou in all other positions.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Did you go to bed early last n____?

2. Would you like to j____ our club?

3. We are moving from the city to a small t____.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. Did you go to bed early last n____?

   A. ight
   B. iet
   C. it
   D. ite

5. Would you like to j____ our club?

   A. oin
   B. oyn
   C. one
   D. oen

W4 Sv 2200 (continued)

6. We are moving from the city to a small t____.

A. own
B. oun
C. one
D. awn

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

Many words that are spelled with vowel digraphs are homophones (e.g., right-write, blew-blue. Homophones are assessed elsewhere (Skill W4 Sm 3000) and should be avoided in assessing this skill.

Target words are cued with the initial consonant or consonant cluster. By omitting the final consonant as an additional cue, examiners can employ the vowel-consonant-e spellings as distractors (e.g., nite as a distractor for night). Consequently, the ability to spell final consonants is prerequisite to the assessment of this skill.

Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), another vowel digraph that corresponds to the same sound (all B's). The two remaining choices may be single vowels, digraphs, or other spelling patterns that may be confused with the target digraph.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. Where a suggested distractor is symbolized with a letter followed by three dots and the letter e (.e.g., i...e), the reference is to the vowel-consonant-e spelling pattern (e.g., bite, line).

ie - igh, i, y, ye
igh - i...e, ie, i, y, ye
ue - ew, oo, u
ew - ue, oo, u
oi - oy, oe, o...e
oy - oi, oye, oe
ou - ow, o...e
ow - ou, o...e, aw

Skill: W5 Sv 2300

Skill Statement

Spells vowel digraphs: /e/-ea, /ô/-au, /ô/-augh, /ô/-aw, /ô/-ough, /u/-ou.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding digraph. (The term "digraph" here refers to the spelling of a single sound that is represented by two or more letters.) The student also applies the following specific rules: /ô/ is spelled with aw at the end of a word and before k, l, and n (e.g., saw, hawk, crawl, lawn); /ô/ is spelled with au in other environments; /ô/ is spelled with augh or ough only when /ô/ is followed by the letter t (e.g., caught, thought). Although the sound /ô/ is distinct from the sound /o/ in some dialects, in other dialects, only the latter occurs. Those who do not differentiate between the two sounds must memorize those words employing the /ô/ sound.

The /e/ sound spelled ea usually occurs before d or th (e.g., bread, breath). The /u/ sound spelled ou is an infrequent medial digraph derived from the French (e.g., touch, young) and is not predictable. Students must memorize those words in which the ou spelling occurs.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. You can't make a sandwich without br___d.

2. My sister t___t me how to swim.

3. Don't t___ch the wet paint.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. You can't make a sandwich without br___d.

   A. ea
   B. e
   C. ei
   D. i

5. My sister t___t me how to swim.

   A. augh
   B. au
   C. aw
   D. o

W5 Sv 2300 (continued)

6. Don't t___ch the wet paint.

A. ou
B. u
C. o
D. oo

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing digraph. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), vowel letters or vowel digraphs that represent either sound or graphic confusions.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

ea - e, i, ei
au - aw, ou, o, a
augh - au, aw, o, ough
aw - au, ow, o, a
ough - augh, au, aw, o
ou - u, o, oo

Skill: M2 Sv 3100

Skill Statement

Spells vowel-consonant-e pattern: /ā/-a...e, /ī/-i...e, /ō/-o...e.

Skill Description

The student hears the long-vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding spelling with the vowel-consonant-e pattern. The student applies the rule that /ī/ before a final consonant is usually spelled with i...e. In the cases of a...e and o...e, the student must recall the proper spelling for a specific word. The vowel digraphs ai and oa are also common spellings for these sounds.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: cake]

   c___

2. [picture: five]

   f___

3. [picture: rope]

   r___

Directions: Which letters finish the word?

4. [picture: cake]

   c___

   A. ake
   B. aik
   C. ak

5. [picture: five]

   f___

   A. ive
   B. iev
   C. iv

W2 Sv 3100 (continued)

6. [picture: rope]

r___

A. ope
B. oap
C. op

Directions: Which letters finish the word?

7. My pet birds live in a c___.

A. age
B. aig
C. ag

8. Maria wants a b___ for her birthday.

A. ike
B. iek
C. ik

9. How many times can you jump the r___?

A. ope
B. oap
C. op

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-9). When a picture stimulus is used, the initial consonant or consonant cluster is presented with a blank where the assessed spelling belongs.

Items 1-3 are constructed-response items in which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-9 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from three spellings.

Vocabulary restrictions preclude the use of constructed-response items employing a sentence as the stimulus. Such sentences do not provide an ample number of cues for most words appropriate to this assessment.

Target words are cued with the initial consonant or consonant cluster only. If the student were given the second consonant also (e.g.,

W2 Sv 3100 (continued)

c___k___), application of the vowel-consonant-e pattern would be the logical response on the basis of the visual cue.

Many words that are spelled with the vowel-consonant-e pattern are homophones (e.g., tale-tail, rode-road). Homophones are assessed elsewhere (Skill W4 Sm 3000) and should be avoided in assessing this skill. Additionally, words in which an /r/ sound follows the vowel should not be employed as target words. The /r/ sound often changes the sound of the vowel; thus, the various vowel-r patterns are assessed elsewhere (Skills W3 Sv 4100 and W4 Sv 4200).

For selected-response items, the number of choices at this grade level should be limited to three. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's above), choices should include a vowel digraph with the same sound as the correct spelling (all choice B's), and the correct vowel without the e ending (all choice C's).

Spellings are listed below with digraphs and single vowels that can be combined with final consonants as distractors (e.g., cayk as a distractor for cake).

a...e - ay, ai, a
i...e - i, ie, igh
o...e - oa, ow, o, oe

Comment: The vowel digraphs, ie, igh, and oe are not commonly taught until the fourth grade and should be employed with caution. Students may be familiar with some words spelled with these digraphs (e.g., pie, high, hoe). Also, ie and oe (as well as ae) may be interpreted as visual confusions (e.g., tiem for time).

Skill: W6 Sv 3200

Skill Statement

Spells vowel-consonant-e pattern: /ē/-e...e, /u/-o...e, /ū/, /yū/-u...e.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding vowel-consonant-e spelling.

The e...e spelling occurs rarely, particularly in words that are familiar to sixth grade students (e.g., theme, scheme). Since the medial sound of /ē/ is more commonly spelled with the digraphs ee and ea, students must memorize those words in which this pattern appears.

The o...e spelling of /u/ is infrequent. It occurs in several common words, but only when the final consonant is m, n, or v (e.g., come, none, love). Although the u spelling is more frequent in most environments, the o...e spelling is predictable when the final consonant is v.

The u...e spelling represents two sounds: the vowel sound in words such as mule, as well as the vowel sound in words such as rule. The vowel sound in rule is frequently spelled oo (e.g., boot, school), but the vowel sound in mule must be spelled u...e before a final consonant.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letters that finish the word.

1. The crooks thought of a sch___ to steal some money. It was a good plan.

2. The airplane flew ab___ the clouds.

3. Pam put an ice c___ in her drink to make it cold.

Directions: Which letters finish the word?

4. The crooks thought of a sch___ to steal some money. It was a good plan.

   A. eme
   B. eam
   C. eem
   D. em

W6 Sv 3200 (continued)

5. The airplane flew ab___ the clouds.

   A. ove
   B. uv
   C. ov
   D. uve

6. Pam put an ice c___ in her drink to make it cold.

   A. ube
   B. oob
   C. ub
   D. ueb

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing spelling. Item 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

In assessing the e...e and u...e patterns, distractors with r as a final consonant should be avoided. Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), word endings that contain the single vowel and/or vowel digraphs that may represent the target sound.

The spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

e...e - ea, ee, e
o...e - u, o, u...e
u...e - oo, u, ue, ew

Skill: W3 Sv 4100

Skill Statement

Spells vowel-r pattern: /är/-ar, /ôr/-or.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel-r sound in a one-syllable word and generates the corresponding letters. The student understands that ar is the regular spelling for the /är/ sound, and that /ôr/ is spelled or before consonants. (The -ore spelling pattern is assessed at another level [Skill W4 Sv 4200] and does not form a part of the present assessment.)

For students speaking r-less dialects, words like "part-pot" and cork-calk" may sound similar.

The skill "Spells vowel-r patterns" assumes an implicit skill, "Spells words with vowel-r patterns." However, only the former skill is assessed since it permits more precise diagnosis.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: star]

   st___

2. [picture: corn]

   c___n

3. [picture: fork]

   f___k

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. [picture: star]

   st___

   A. ar
   B. or
   C. a
   D. ur

W3 Sv 4100 (continued)

5. [picture: corn]

c___n

A. or
B. ar
C. o
D. u

6. [picture: fork]

f___k

A. or
B. ar
C. o
D. a

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

7. My dog has a very loud b___k.

8. The grass is green in our front y___d.

9. John is not very tall. He is very sh__t.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

10. My dog has a very loud b___k.

A. ar
B. or
C. a
D. o

11. The grass is green in our front y___d.

A. ar
B. or
C. a
D. o

12. John is not very tall. He is very sh___t.

A. or
B. ar
C. o
D. u

W3 Sv 4100 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). When the picture stimulus is used, a blank is placed where the assessed spelling belongs. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

For selected-response items, third grade students should be able to respond to four choices. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's above), choices should include an incorrect vowel-r spelling (all choice B's) and, where vowel-r is the medial sound, two single vowels (all C's and D's). Where vowel-r is the final sound (e.g., star), one of the single vowel distractors should be replaced by another vowel-r spelling.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

ar - or, a, o, ur
or - ar, o, u, a, ur

Skill: W4 Sv 4200

Skill Statement

Spells vowel-r pattern: /er/-are, /er/-air, /er/-ear, /ėr/-er, /ėr/-ir, /ėr/-ur, /ėr/-or, /ėr/-ur, /ir/-ear, /ôr/-ore.

Skill Description

The student hears the vowel-r sound in a word and generates the corresponding letters.

Spellings with the vowel-r pattern are particularly difficult for many students because /r/ often affects the pronunciation of the preceding vowel. Additionally, pronunciation of vowel-r sounds varies among speakers of different dialects. Those who speak r-less dialects may not hear the /r/ in certain words. Such students must rely heavily on visual memory in spelling vowel-r words.

There are only a few rules students may depend upon in spelling vowel-r words: /er/ spelled with are or air occurs only at the end of words; /er/ spelled with ear appears only in bear, pear, swear, tear, and wear; /ôr/ spelled ore occurs at the end of words; /ir/ is generally spelled with ear; /ėr/ spelled with or occurs after the letter w, but the er, ir, and ur spellings cannot be predicted.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Please put the ch___ under the table.

2. She is a very nice p___son.

3. There are twelve months in a y___.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word.

4. Please put the ch___ under the table.

   A. air
   B. are
   C. ar
   D. er

5. She is a very nice p___son.

   A. er
   B. ur
   C. ir
   D. r

W4 Sv 4200 (continued)

6. There are twelve months in a y___.

A. ear
B. eer
C. er
D. ir

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence that unambiguously cues a word that features the assessed spelling. A blank replaces the assessed spelling in the word. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

Many of the vowel-r words common to this level are homophones (e.g., stare-stair, hear-here). The ability to differentiate between homophones is assessed elsewhere (Skill W4 Sm 3000), so their use as target words should be avoided.

In a complete test, at least one item should be included for which a single letter is the correct answer. This policy will deter students from answering on the basis of number of letters.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. As mentioned above, care must be taken to avoid the use of homophones as distractors.

are - air, ere, ear, er, ar
air - are, ere, ear, er, ar
ear (/er/) - are, air, ere, er, ar
er - ur, ir, r
ir - ur, er, r
or - ur, er, ir, r
ur - er, ir, r
ear (/ir/) - eer, ere, er, ir
ore - or, oer, owr

Skill: W6 Sv 5000

Skill Statement

Spells the schwa sound (/ə/).

Skill Description

The student hears the schwa sound in a word of more than one syllable and generates the corresponding spelling. The student also understands that the schwa sound (a neutral vowel sound that occurs in unstressed syllables) may be spelled with the letters a, e, i, o, or u.

When the schwa sound occurs as the first or last sound in a word, it is usually spelled with the letter a (e.g., above, sofa). When it occurs in other positions, however, the spelling is not generally predictable. Students must rely on memory in spelling most words with the schwa sound.

While the prefix a- and the suffixes/endings -ar, -er, -or, -al, -el, and -le all utilize the schwa sound, they are assessed elsewhere (Skills W5 Sa 4000, W4 Sa 3100, W6 Sa 3200, and W6 Sv 6000) and should not be used for this skill.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter that finishes the word.

1. The house is empty. It has been vac___nt for weeks.

2. Ben lives in a cab___n in the mountains.

3. There are sixty min___tes in an hour.

Directions: Which letter finishes the word?

4. The house is empty. It has been vac___nt for weeks.

   A. a
   B. u
   C. e
   D. i

5. Ben lives in a cab___n in the mountains.

   A. i
   B. e
   C. u
   D. o

W6 Sv 5000 (continued)

6. There are sixty min___tes in an hour.

A. u
B. i
C. e
D. a

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letter. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

Answer choices for the selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), three alternate spellings for the schwa sound.

Skill: W6 Sv 6000

Skill Statement

Spells endings with schwa: /ər/ endings: ar, er, or; /əl/ endings: al, el, le.

Skill Description

The student hears the ending in a two-syllable word and generates the spelling for the corresponding neutral vowel sound (schwa) and final consonant.

Although the -ar, -er, and -or spellings are homophonous, function can sometimes differentiate among them: -ar is frequently in adjectives (e.g., popular, similar). Additionally, the -or spelling often occurs after ct (e.g., tractor) and after r (e.g., error).

The -al, -el, and -le endings are also homophonous, but they can be differentiated by certain characteristics: -al frequently occurs in adjectives (e.g., several); el generally occurs after m, n, r, w, sh, tch, dg, and v, while le occurs in other environments.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. I kept ten doll___s to put in the bank.

2. Jan hopes to trav___ around the world.

3. Some wild animals live in the jung___.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. I kept ten doll___s to put in the bank.

   A. ar
   B. er
   C. ir
   D. or

5. Jan hopes to trav___ around the world.

   A. el
   B. al
   C. le
   D. ul

W6 Sv 6000 (continued)

6. Some wild animals live in the jung___.

A. le
B. el
C. al
D. ul

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letters. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

Answer choices for the selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), at least one homophonous word ending for the target item (all B's). Choices C and D may represent another homophonous word ending and/or other spellings that are similar to the target spelling.

Skill: W2 Sa 1000

Skill Statement

Spells plurals by adding -s or -es.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the plural of a noun is usually formed by adding -s or -es to the root word. The student understands that, while -s forms the plural of most nouns, -es occurs after words that end with the letters s, z, sh, ch, and x.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. [picture: boats]

   boat___

2. [picture: dishes]

   dish___

3. [picture: boxes]

   box___

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. [picture: boats]

   boat___

   A. s
   B. es

5. [picture: dishes]

   dish___

   A. es
   B. s

6. [picture: boxes]

   box___

   A. es
   B. s

W2 Sa 1000 (continued)

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

7. There are two boat___ in the water.

8. Please put all the dish___away.

9. Father has five box___ in the car.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

10. There are two boat___ in the water.

A. s
B. es

11. Please put all the dish___ away.

A. es
B. s

12. Father has five box___ in the car.

A. es
B. s

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: write, finish.

Item Description

The stimulus is either a picture (items 1-6) or a simple sentence (items 7-12). When the picture stimulus is used, a blank is placed where the plural suffix belongs. Pictures reflect more than one of the same item. When the sentence stimulus is used, sentences must clearly cue plurality.

Items 1-3 and 7-9 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-6 and 10-12 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from the two plural suffixes.

When selected-response items are used, the answer choices for this skill should be limited to the correct answer (all choice A's above) and the other plural suffix (all choice B's).

Skill: W3 Sa 2000

Skill Statement

Spells verb forms by adding -s, -es, -ed, -ing: one-syllable verbs requiring no changes.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that verbs must be inflected to fit certain grammatical needs by adding suffixes. Given a verb, the student generates the appropriate suffix to spell a form of the verb that is grammatically correct in its context.

While this and certain other spelling skills overlap with language skills, formal knowledge of grammatical terms and concepts is not a prerequisite to this skill. It is assumed, however, that the student is familiar with the process of suffixation in oral language and is able to generate the verb forms required to produce a grammatical sentence. The student also applies the rule that -es occurs only after root words that end with the letters s, z, sh, ch and x. Changes in the spelling of root words by doubling the final consonant, dropping the final e, etc., are not required to perform the addition of suffixes at this level.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Mr. Brown is a teacher. He teach___ at our school right now.

2. After we left, it start___ to rain.

3. Sandy and Jan are play___ a game.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. Mr. Brown is a teacher. He teach___ at our school right now.

   A. es
   B. s
   C. ed
   D. d

W3 Sa 2000 (continued)

5. After we left, it start___ to rain.

   A. ed
   B. d
   C. ing
   D. es

6. Sandy and Jan are play___ a game.

   A. ing
   B. en
   C. ed
   D. s

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing suffix. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

The verbs selected to elicit spellings should be one-syllable words that do not require spelling changes for the addition of these suffixes. Sentences must be constructed in such a manner that the student will not be tempted to substitute a different suffix; e.g., "John work___ all day" can use either -s or -ed as a suffix.

The selected-response items contain four choices. In addition to the correct spelling (all choice A's above), choices should include a sound-related distractor (all B's) and two grammatical distractors (all C's and D's).

Skill: W4 Sa 3100

Skill Statement

Spells new words by adding suffixes: -ly, -er, -est.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that root words must be expanded to fit certain grammatical needs by adding suffixes. Given a root word, the student generates the appropriate suffix to spell a new word that is grammatically correct in its context.

Formal knowledge of grammatical terms and concepts is not a prerequisite to performing the operations involved in adding these suffixes. Suffixed words that form adverbs (-ly), comparative (-er) and superlative (-est) adjectives, and agentive nouns (-er) are common to most students' vocabulary.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. The man walked down the street very slow___.

2. John is tall___ than his brother.

3. This is the cold___ month of the year.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. The man walked down the street very slow___.

   A. ly
   B. ily
   C. lee
   D. y

5. John is tall___ than his brother.

   A. er
   B. ur
   C. ir
   D. r

6. This is the cold___ month of the year.

   A. est
   B. es
   C. st
   D. s

W4 Sa 3100 (continued)

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing letter. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

The words selected to elicit spellings should be one-syllable words that do not require any modification in their spelling (e.g., dropping the final e, changing y to i) in order to add the suffixes being assessed.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors. The distractors represent common sound and/or graphic confusions.

-ly - -ily, -lee, -y, -le
-er - -ur, -ir, -r
-est - -es, -ess, -st, -s

Skill: W6 Sa 3200

Skill Statement

Spells new words by adding suffixes: -age, -al, -ance, -ar, -ful, -ion, -less, -ment, -ness, -or, -y.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that suffixes must often be added to root words in order to meet certain grammatical requirements. Given a root word, the student generates the appropriate suffix to spell a new word that is grammatically correct in its context.

Formal knowledge of grammatical terms and concepts is not a prerequisite to this skill. The student must, however, have had sufficient oral language experience to understand the particular function and/or meaning of the suffixes being assessed.

Since the present assessment focuses on the spelling of particular suffixes, the student is not required to change the spelling of the root word before adding the suffix. The various rules for modifying root words for suffixation are assessed at earlier levels (Skills W4 Ssp 2000, 3000, and 4000).

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Ken wants to be a profession___ musician.

2. Thank you! You have been very help___.

3. It was care___ of me to lose the money.

Directions: Which letter or letters finish the word?

4. Ken wants to be a profession___ musician.

   A. al
   B. el
   C. le
   D. il

5. Thank you! You have been very help___.

   A. ful
   B. full
   C. fil
   D. fill

W6 Sa 3200 (continued)

6. It was care___ of me to lose the money.

A. less
B. les
C. liss
D. lis

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student generates an answer and fills in the missing suffix. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

Answer choices for the selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), a homophonous suffix or word ending. Where this is not possible, a homophonous spelling should be used. Other distractors should be determined by the specific phonemic or graphemic nature of the target suffix.

Spellings are listed below with their best distractors.

-age - adge, ej, ij, ige
-al - el, il, le, ul
-ance - ence, ens, ins
-ar - er, ir, ur
-ful - full, fil, fill
-ion - on, en, oin, un
-less - liss, les, lis
-ment - mint, mant, munt
-ness - niss, nes, nis
-or - er, ir, ur
-y - ie, ey, ee

Skill: W5 Sa 4000

Skill Statement

Spells new words by adding prefixes: a-, dis-, ex-, re-, un-.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that certain words are formed by the addition of a prefix to a root word or a word part. Given a root word or a word part, the student generates the appropriate prefix to spell a meaningful word.

The student should know that prefixes often have predictable meanings. The prefix dis- means "not" (e.g., disobey); ex- sometimes means "out of" or "from" (e.g., export, exit); re- can mean either "again" (e.g., reform) or "back" (e.g., return); un- frequently means "not" (e.g., unhappy), but sometimes means that an operation is reversed (e.g., unwind). The prefix a- has little meaning in modern English but, like the other prefixes in this assessment, can be attached to either a root word (e.g., across) or a word part (e.g., above).

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that complete the word.

1. What time did you fall ___sleep last night?

2. Who was the first explorer to ___cover America?

3. I will be ___able to go to the party.

Directions: Which letter or letters complete the word?

4. What time did you fall ___sleep last night?

   A. a
   B. u
   C. ad
   D. de

5. Who was the first explorer to ___cover America?

   A. dis
   B. di
   C. mis
   D. ex

W5 Sa 4000 (continued)

6. I will be ___able to go to the party.

A. un
B. unn
C. in
D. en

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing prefix. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four various spellings.

Answer choices for selected-response items should include, in addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), a letter or letters representing a likely spelling confusion (all B's). Answer choices C and D represent other prefixes that may be confused with the target prefix on the basis of sound, meaning or grammer. The use of a particular prefix as a distractor will vary in accordance with the root word or word part used in the target item. A distractor that creates a word similar in meaning to the correct answer should not be used (e.g., discover, uncover).

Skill: W4 Ssp 1000

Skill Statement

Spells plurals by changing f or fe to v and adding -es.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the plural of certain root words that end with f or fe is formed by changing the f or fe to v and adding -es (e.g., calf-calves, wife-wives).

The student also recognizes that there are exceptions to this rule (e.g., chef-chefs, safe-safes), but that the proper mode of affixation can be predicted on the basis of sound. If /vz/ is heard at the end of the plural word, then the rule is applied. If /s/ is heard at the end of the plural word, the proper suffix is the letter s and no change in the root word is required.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word that finishes the sentence. Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

1. [leaf + s]

   The _____ fell off the tree.

2. [knife + s]

   Please get the forks and the _____.

3. [reef + s]

   The captain of the ship did not see the _____.

Directions: Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

4. [leaf + s]

   A. leaves
   B. leafs
   C. leavse
   D. leafes

W5 Ssp 1000 (continued)

5. knife + s

A. knives
B. knifes
C. knivse
D. knifse

6. reef + s

A. reefs
B. reeves
C. reevse
D. reefes

Item Description

Either of two formats may be employed in assessing this skill. The first (items 1-3) is a constructed-response format in which a root word and the -s are prominently displayed in a box, each separated from the other by a plus sign. A sentence follows, with a blank where the suffixed word belongs. The student fills in the blank with the correctly spelled word.

The second format (items 4-6) also employs the box containing the separated root word and suffix. This, however, is a selected-response format requiring the student to select the properly suffixed word from four spellings.

Both formats contain a non-exemplar, an item that assesses the student's knowledge of the obverse of the rule, and thus requires no modification in the root word before adding the suffix (see items 3 and 6).

Choice A in all sample items is the correct response. Choice B in items 4 and 5 is the root word plus the plural suffix -s. Selection of this distractor indicates a lack of knowledge of the rule. In the non-exemplar item 6, the root word does not require modification prior to adding -s. Choice B in this item shows the rule applied to a root that does not require it and thus indicates indiscriminate application of the rule.

Choice C shows f(e) changed to v, but the incorrect ending se has been added. Students who select this distractor show a partial knowledge of the rule.

Choice D shows the unmodified root word plus the incorrect ending -es or se. Selection of this distractor indicates both a lack of knowledge of the rule and unfamiliarity with more fundamental affixation processes.

Skill: W4 Ssp 2000

Skill Statement

Spells new words by changing y to i when adding certain suffixes.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the addition of certain suffixes to a root word often requires a modification in the spelling of the root word. The student applies the rule that when a suffix beginning with a vowel other than i is added to a root word that ends with the single vowel y, the y must be changed to the letter i. The student understands that this rule does not apply to root words ending with the two-letter vowels ay, ey, and oy.

The suffixes employed in assessing this skill are -es, -ed, -er, and -est.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word that finishes the sentence. Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

1. city + s

   How many _____ are there in the state?

2. funny + est

   That was the _____ play I've ever seen.

3. play + ed

   The children _____ a new game.

Directions: Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

4. city + s

   A. cities
   B. citys
   C. citties

5. funny + est

   A. funniest
   B. funnyst
   C. funiest

W4 Ssp 2000 (continued)

6. play + ed

A. played
B. plaied
C. plaid

Comment: The following words may not be in student's reading vocabularies: correct, suffixes.

Item Description

Either of two formats may be employed in assessing this skill. The first (items 1-3) is a constructed-response format in which a root word and a suffix are prominently displayed in a box, each separated from the other by a plus sign. A sentence follows, with a blank where the suffixed word belongs. The student fills in the blank with the correctly spelled word.

The second format (items 4-6) also employs the box containing the separated root word and suffix. This, however, is a selected-response format requiring the student to select the properly suffixed word from four spellings.

Both formats contain a non-exemplar, an item that assesses the student's knowledge of the obverse of the rule, and thus requires no modification in the root word before adding the suffix (see items 3 and 6).

Distractors should be constructed to reflect possible spelling errors rather than pronunciation errors. In some dialects, certain suffixes tend to be omitted or to otherwise differ from Standard English pronunciation. Inasmuch as this particular skill focuses on a specific process, it would be inappropriate to penalize students for errors based on pronunciation differences.

In addition to the correct answer (all choice A's in the sample items), distractors should include the root word plus the suffix (choice B's), and an incorrect spelling in which the final y is changed to i (choice C's). For the non-exemplar items, choices A and B are reversed.

Skill: W4 Ssp 3000

Skill Statement

Spells new words by dropping final e when adding certain suffixes.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the addition of a suffix to a root word often requires a modification in the spelling of the root word. The student applies the rule that when a suffix beginning with a vowel is added to a root word that ends with a single letter e, the final e in the root word must be dropped; e.g., time + er = timer, but see + ing = seeing.

The suffixes employed in assessing this skill are -ed, -ing, -en, -er, and -est.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word that finishes the sentence. Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

1. ride + ing

   We were _____ in my uncle's car.

2. deep + er

   The water is _____ than I thought.

3. call + ing

   I think someone is _____ you.

Directions: Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

4. ride + ing

   A. riding
   B. rideing
   C. ridding

5. deep + er

   A. deeper
   B. deepr
   C. deper

W4 Ssp 3000 (continued)

6. call + ing

A. calling
B. caling
C. caling

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: correct, suffixes.

Item Description

Either of two formats may be employed in assessing this skill. The first (items 1-3) is a constructed-response format in which a root word and a suffix are prominently displayed in a box, each separated from the other by a plus sign. A sentence follows, with a blank where the suffixed word belongs. The student fills in the blank with the correctly spelled word.

The second format (items 4-6) also employs the box containing the separated root word and suffix. This, however, is a selected-response format requiring the student to select the properly suffixed word from four spellings.

Both formats contain a non-exemplar, an item that assesses the student's knowledge of the obverse of the rule, and thus requires no modification in the root word before adding the suffix (see items 3 and 6).

Distractors should be constructed to reflect possible spelling errors rather than pronunciation errors. In some dialects, certain suffixes tend to be omitted or to otherwise differ from Standard English pronunciation. Inasmuch as this particular skill focuses on a specific process, it would be inappropriate to penalize students for errors based on pronunciation differences.

The nature of the distractors employed in assessing this skill will vary with the suffix and the root word selected to assess the skill. In addition to the correct answer (all choice A's), some distractors may feature the retention of a final e (choice B in item 4), dropping the vowel in the suffix (choice B in items 5 and 6), or doubling the final consonant in the root word (choice C in item 4).

Skill: W4 Ssp 4000

Skill Statement

Spells new words by doubling the final consonant when adding certain suffixes.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the addition of a suffix to a one-syllable root word often requires a modification in the spelling of the root word. The student applies the rule that when a suffix beginning with a vowel is added to a root word that ends with a single consonant letter preceded by a single vowel letter, the final consonant in the root word must be doubled. (When word final, the letters w and y are parts of vowel spellings and are not treated as single consonant.)

The suffixes employed in assessing this skill are -ed, -ing, -er, -est.

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word that finishes the sentence. Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

1. hop + ing

   The rabbit was _____ across the field.

2. swim + er

   Jan is a very good _____.

3. mail + ed

   I _____ the letter yesterday.

Directions: Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

4. hop + ing

   A. hopping
   B. hoping
   C. hoppng

5. swim + er

   A. swimmer
   B. swimer
   C. swimmr

W4 Ssp 4000 (continued)

6. mail + ed

A. mailed
B. mailled
C. maill d

Comment: The following words may not be in students' reading vocabularies: correct, suffixes.

Item Description

Either of two formats may be employed in assessing this skill. The first (items 1-3) is a constructed-response format in which a root word and a suffix are prominently displayed in a box, each separated from the other by a plus sign. A sentence follows, with a blank where the suffixed word belongs. The student fills in the blank with the correctly spelled word.

The second format (items 4-6) also employs the box containing the separated root word and suffix. This, however, is a selected-response format requiring the student to select the properly suffixed word from four spellings.

Both formats contain a non-exemplar, an item that assesses the student's knowledge of the obverse of the rule, and thus requires no modification in the root word before adding the suffix (see items 3 and 6).

Distractors should be constructed to reflect possible spelling errors rather than pronunciation errors. In some dialects, certain suffixes tend to be omitted or to otherwise differ from Standard English pronunciation. Inasmuch as this particular skill focuses on a specific process, it would be inappropriate to penalize students for errors based on pronunciation differences.

In addition to the correct answer (all choice A's), distractors should include the suffixed root word without a doubled consonant (choice B's), and the correctly doubled consonant with a change in the suffix (choice C's). For the non-exemplar items, choices A and B are reversed.

Skill: W6 Ssp 5000

Skill Statement

Spells new words by changing the spelling of the root word when adding certain suffixes: be to pt, d(e) to s, t to ss, er to r, y to ic.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that the addition of a suffix to a root word often requires a modification in the spelling of a root word. Given a root word and a suffix, the student properly modifies the root word and generates a suffixed form of the word.

The student also applies the following specific rules:

be become pt when adding the suffixes -ion or -ive to words containing the root scribe (e.g., subscribe-subscription, describe-descriptive)

d or de becomes s when adding the suffixes -ion or -ive to root words ending in those letters (e.g., extend-extension, conclude-conclusive)

t becomes ss when adding the suffixes -ion or -ive to words containing the Latin root mit (e.g., admit-admission, permit-permissive)

er may become r when certain suffixes are added to some words ending in er (e.g., anger-angry, enter-entrance, center-central)

a y at the end of a root word is dropped before adding the suffix -ic (e.g., history-historic)

This latter rule also applies when -ic occurs in a word with multiple suffixes (e.g., multiply-multiplication, apply-applicant).

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word that finishes the sentence. Remember the rules you have learned about adding suffixes to words.

1. subscribe + ion

Would you like to buy a _____ to this magazine?

2. defend + ive

The other team was so strong that we had to play a _____ game.

W6 Ssp 5000 (continued)

3. permit + ion

Did you ask for _____ to go to the dance?

Directions: Which spelling is correct? Remember the rules you have learned about changing words when you add suffixes to them.

4. subscribe + ion

A. subscription
B. subscribtion
C. subscripcion

5. defend + ive

A. defensive
B. defendsive
C. defensiv

6. permit + ion

A. permission
B. permition
C. permision

Item Description

Either of two formats may be employed in assessing this skill. The first (items 1-3) is a constructed-response format in which a root word and a suffix are prominently displayed in a box, each separated from the other by a plus sign. A sentence follows, with a blank where the suffixed word belongs. The student fills in the blank with the correctly spelled word.

The second format (items 4-6) also employs the box containing the separated root word and suffix. This, however, is a selected-response format requiring the student to select the properly suffixed word from four spellings.

The nature of the distractors employed in assessing this skill will vary in accordance with the spelling change and the suffix chosen to assess the skill. In addition to the correct answer (all choice A's above), some items may effectively employ the root word plus the suffix without any changes in the root word (choice B in item 6). Other items may require a slight modification in the root word to create an effective distractor (choice B in items 4 and 5). Choice C for items 4 and 6 represent misapplication of the required change within the root word.

Skill: W4 Sm 1000

Skill Statement

Spells irregular words.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that there are certain words that cannot be spelled on the basis of spelling rules. The student hears a familiar word, recognizes that it does not follow a normal sound-to-spelling pattern, and generates the correct spelling.

Irregular words are taught as early as the first grade and continue to be taught throughout the grades. By the end of the fourth grade, students have been exposed to a sufficient number of irregular words to permit meaningful assessment.

The following is a list of words that are commonly taught as irregular words prior to the end of the fourth grade. Since only a part of each word is usually irregular, the specific letters or unique spelling pattern that constitutes the irregular spelling is shown. Certain words that are taught as irregular in the early grades (e.g., come, of, one, the) have been excluded from the list because common usage make their assessment at this level inappropriate.

again (ai-/e/)
answer (silent w)
been (ee-/i/)
buy (uy-/ī/)
does (oe-/u/)
done (o...e-/u/)
door (oor-/ôr/)
eye (eye-/ī/)
from (o-/u/)
give (i...e-/i/)
goes (oe-/ō/)
gone (o...e-/o/)
great (ea-/ā/)
here (ere-/ir/)
move (o...e-/ū/)
once (o-/wu/)
said (ai-/e/)
some (o...e-/u/)
sure (s-/sh/)
their (eir-/er/)
there (ere-/er/)
were (ere-/ėr/)
where (ere-/er/)
your (our-/ůr/)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the letter or letters that finish the word.

1. Please say it again. I didn't hear what you s___.
2. I went to the fair last week. Have you b___ there yet?
3. This coat is mine. Is that y____ coat?

W4 Sm 1000 (continued)

Directions: Which is the correct spelling?

4. Please say it again. I didn't hear what you _____.

   A. said
   B. sed
   C. sayed
   D. sade

5. Have you ____ to the fair yet?

   A. been
   B. bin
   C. bene
   D. ben

6. This coat is mine. Is that ____ coat?

   A. your
   B. yoor
   C. yore
   D. yur

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence. Items 1-3 are constructed-response items for which the student must generate an answer and fill in the missing letters. Items 4-6 are selected-response items requiring the student to choose an answer from four spellings.

When the constructed-response format is used, the target word must be cued by providing the initial consonant or consonant cluster. This device prevents the student from substituting a word with the same or a similar meaning. The disadvantage of such a cue is that it excludes the assessment of words with irregular beginnings (e.g., eye, once, sure).

When the selected-response format is used, answer choices should include the correct answer (all choice A's), a distractor that displays the expected sound-spelling pattern for the target word (all choice B's), and two more distant distractors featuring sound or graphic confusions (choices C and D).

Skill: W4 Sm 2000

Skill Statement

Spells compound words.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that certain English words are the result of putting two words together to create a new word. The student generates the correct spelling of compound words by applying the rules that there is no change in the spelling of either word and there is no space between the component words.

Hyphenated compounds (e.g., drive-in) and compounds written as separate words (e.g., ice cream) are not commonly taught at this level and are not assessed here.

The following is a list of some compound words that are frequently taught at this and/or lower levels.

afternoon
airplane
barnyard
baseball
bedroom
birthday
butterfly
cardboard
cornfield
cupcake
daydream
doorbell
downstairs
drugstore
everyone
flashlight
football
gingerbread
goldfish
grandfather
grandmother
lighthouse
newspaper
outside
scarecrow
sidewalk
snowstorm
sunset
sunshine
taxicab
upstairs

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Write the word or words that complete the sentence.

1. news + paper

   I read an interesting story in the _____.

2. side + walk

   Please don't ride your bike on the _____.

3. cup + cake

   May I have a _____ after lunch?

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W4 Sm 2000 (continued)

Directions: Which word or words complete the sentence?

4. news + paper

I read an interesting story in the _____.

A. newspaper
B. news paper
C. newsspaper

5. side + walk

Please don't ride your bike on the _____.

A. sidewalk
B. side walk
C. sidwalk

6. cup + cake

May I have a _____ after lunch?

A. cupcake
B. cup cake
C. cuppcake

Item Description

Either of two formats may be employed in assessing this skill. The first (items 1-3) is a constructed-response format in which two words which may be joined to form a compound word are prominently displayed in a box. They are separated from each other by a plus sign. A sentence follows, with a blank where the compound word belongs. The student fills in the blank with the correctly spelled compound word.

The second format (items 4-6) also employs the box containing the separated segments of the compound. This, however, is a selected-response format requiring the student to select the correctly spelled compound word from three spellings.

Choice A in all selected-response items is the correct response. Choice B is the unjoined segments of the compound word. Selection of this distractor indicates that the student is unaware that the target word is formed by joining two words to form a compound. Choice C shows the segments joined, but misspelled. The form that the the misspelling takes will depend upon the structure of the word. If the first segment of the compound ends in a consonant (e.g., items 4 and 6), that consonant should be doubled. If the first segment of the compound ends with an e marker (e.g., item 5), that e should be

W4 Sm 2000 (continued)

dropped. Both of these processes parallel common affixation practices at this grade level. Examiners should avoid the use of distractors that assess the student's knowledge of alternate spellings of the same sound (e.g., buterfly for butterfly, cupcaik for cupcake), or that reflect divergent pronunciations (e.g., birfday for birthday, aftenoon for afternoon). Such distractors are inappropriate for a task that focuses on the student's ability to join segments to form compounds.

Skill: W4 Sm 3000

Skill Statement

Spells homophones.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that there are certain words that sound the same, but that have different spellings and different meanings. Given the meaning of a particular homophone, the student generates the correct spelling. The term homophone is not prerequisite to this skill.

The spelling of homophones is difficult for many students because the spelling cannot be predicted on the basis of sound or rules alone, but is dependent upon meaning as well. Students must depend upon memory to choose correctly between homophones.

The alternate spellings and meanings of those homophones that are common to the language of elementary school children are generally taught throughout the upper elementary grades. Most students have been taught the concept of homophones and have had experience in differentiating between the more common homophones prior to the end of the fourth grade. Other, more difficult, homophones are assessed at grade six (Skill W6 Sm 3000).

The following is a list of homophones that are commonly taught prior to the end of the fourth grade:

ate - eight
beat - beet
blue - blew
by - buy
dear - deer
die - dye
flower - flour
for - four
here - hear
hole - whole
made - maid
mail - male
meet - meat
new - knew
no - know
our - hour
pail - pale
pair - pear
piece - peace
right - write
road - rode
sail - sale
see - sea
sent - cent
sun - son
tale - tail
there - their
through - threw
to - too- two
toe - tow
week - weak
won - one
wood - would

W4 Sm 3000 (continued)

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word finishes the sentence?

1. I will _____ this letter in the morning.

   A. mail
   B. male

2. There are seven days in a _____.

   A. week
   B. weak

3. I wish I _____ how to swim.

   A. knew
   B. new

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence with a blank where the assessed spelling belongs. The student reads the sentence and then selects the correct response from the homophones listed below the sentence. The answer choices are all correctly spelled words. In addition to the correct answer (all choice A's), the other responses are homophones for the target word. Since most of the homophones common to the students' language consist of only two alternate spellings, the number of answer choices will usually be only two.

Skill: W6 Sm 3000

Skill Statement

Spells homophones.

Skill Description

The student recognizes that there are certain words that sound the same, but that have different spellings and different meanings. Given the meaning of a particular homophone, the student generates the correct spelling. The term homophone is not prerequisite to this skill.

The spelling of homophones is difficult for many students because the spelling cannot be predicted on the basis of sound or rules alone, but is dependent on meaning as well. Students must depend on memory to choose correctly between homophones.

The alternate spellings and meanings of those homophones that are common to the language of elementary school children are generally taught throughout the upper elementary grades. Some of the more common homophones are assessed at the fourth grade level (Skill W4 Sm 3000).

The following is a list of homophones that are appropriate for assessment at the sixth grade level:

berry-bury
birth-berth
break-brake
capital-capitol
creak-creek
desert-dessert
fair-fare
fourth-forth
hall-haul
heel-heal
heard-herd
main-mane
pain-pane
pedal-peddle
pier-peer
plain-plane
root-route
shown-shone
so-sew
soar-sore
soul-sole
steak-stake
steal-steel
straight-strait
wait-weight
waste-waist
weather-whether
wring-ring

Assessment

Sample Items

Directions: Which word completes the sentence?

1. Please don't _____ any more paper.

   A. waste
   B. waist

2. Ted felt a sharp _____ in his arm.

   A. pain
   B. pane

W6 Sm 3000 (continued)

3. We usually have warm _____ during the summer.

A. weather
B. whether

Item Description

The stimulus is a simple sentence with a blank where the assessed spelling belongs. The student reads the sentence and then selects the correct response from the homophones listed below the sentence. The answer choices are all correctly spelled words. In addition to the correct answer (all choice A's), the other responses are homophones for the target word.

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